

**CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Monday, December 5, 2011**  
**The Center of Clayton – Multipurpose Room C**

**The following members were present:**

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Ira Berkowitz      | Michelle Harris      |
| Brad Bernstein     | Andrea Maddox-Dallas |
| Mimi Deem          | Omri Praiss          |
| Marguerite Garrick | Eric Schneider       |
| Rosemary Hardy     |                      |

**Excused/Absent:**

Laurel Harrington  
Melanie Tamsky

*Also Present:*

Patty DeForrest  
Eric Gruenenfelder  
Susan Renard

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the November meeting were approved as written.

**Addresses from the Audience:** Ms. Deem asked the members of the audience if they had any items to discuss that were not on the agenda. Audience members did not have any comments.

**Dog Park Survey Results:** Ms. DeForrest reviewed the Dog Park Executive Summary with the Commission and members of the audience. (Please see attached Dog Park Survey Results for additional detailed information.) Major survey findings: Eighty-two percent (82%) of households have visited Shaw Park during the past year, 46% of households indicated they owned a dog, 65% of households indicated they would be either very likely (48%) or somewhat likely (17%) to use a fenced, off leash dog park in Shaw Park. Twenty-four percent (24%) indicated “not likely”, and 10% indicated not sure. Only 1% did not answer. Fifty percent (50%) of households would be very likely to use a fenced, off leash dog park with the understanding that there would be an annual fee.

Those who indicated they had a dog, were asked how likely they were to pay annual membership fees to use a dog park. The majority of households (49%) indicated that they were not sure if restrictions would make them more or less likely to pay an annual fee to use a dog park.

Additional findings from the Dog Park Survey include: Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents believe parking will be an issue, 94% are not currently members of a dog park, however 70% would join a dog park if developed. Also, 57% of households either “strongly agree” or “agree” that a dog park would enhance the City of Clayton, and 50% agree that the proposed location in Shaw Park is a good one.

The last City of Clayton Citizen Survey results showed that about 30% of Clayton residents have dogs. The cross tabular responses make comparisons between dog owners and non-dog owners. Ms. Maddox-Dallas stated that she thinks it is important to look at the results from the whole City’s population. This would weigh stats based on consensus data. Ms. DeForrest said there is a way to recognize results based on community populations.

Ms. Deem stated that she is supportive of a dog park, but there are too many unknowns about Shaw Park usage, especially when the trail is in place. Ms. DeForrest said the hardscape area designated to address water at the trailhead is slated to be at the south end of Shaw Park. Water mitigation is an MSD requirement. Since the proposed dog park would be in the same area, the consultants from SWT are currently exploring other viable options to meet these requirements.

Mr. Praiss said based on survey results, a large percentage of Clayton residents have a dog. He also said the purpose of Shaw Park is to bring the community together, and when looking at the results from questions 10 and 11 on the survey, a large percentage of residents said yes to a dog park in the proposed location. He believes there is no reason to keep holding back on making a decision because the results are clear. Mr. Praiss made a motion stating that the Commission make a recommendation to the BOA to have a Dog Park in Shaw Park at the proposed location listed in the Dog Park Survey. There was no one who seconded this motion. Dog park supporters in the audience were very unhappy about this decision.

Mr. Berkowitz told supporters he was not ready to make a recommendation because he thinks the Commission needs to study the results further. The fact that he wants to study the survey is not a tactic to delay the project. He said this decision to have or not to have a dog park, is not a mandate or democracy. He is not yet sure if Shaw Park is the right location. Mr. Berkowitz also said, this is not a black and white issue; the BOA makes the final decision, he felt the Commission should not put in a dog park solely based on a survey because there is a lot of data in the survey; respondents are not in favor of some things, and we need to find out why. Further, there are many residents who want things; the dog park supporters are not the first group of people making a special request.

Mr. Bernstein stated that he would be more comfortable seconding Mr. Praiss's motion at the next meeting because he needs to spend more time reviewing the survey results. Mr. Bernstein has had conversations with the Clayton Board of Education about the proposed dog park location because it would have a direct effect on athletic activities in Shaw Park. Mr. Schneider does not think Shaw Park is the right location for a dog park. Ms. Garrick also has doubts about the location and thinks it would be best to look for another location. However, she believes Shaw Park may be a good site since there are no neighbors who would be directly affected by a dog park. Ms. DeForrest said it would give her no greater joy to get a dog park. However, just because everyone wants it, do we do it if there is not adequate room for it?

Commission members decided that they will send Ms. DeForrest specific questions they have about the survey results. Questions must be submitted within two weeks, and will be forwarded to the consultants for review.

Ms. Harris stated she is at the Commission meetings as an Aldermanic representative to aid in discussion. She explained that she is unable to vote because she is an alderman. Ms. Harris spoke about why other Master Plan projects have been completed that did not have as high of a percentage rating as the dog park. She also stated that the BOA does listen and she can get very analytical about things. Ms. Harris pointed out that 82% of residents said no to other dog park locations. Everyone should keep in mind that a Shaw Park Dog Park would not have to be permanent; it is a fence, so it is not set in stone. Furthermore, we need to introduce flexible thinking. Mr. Berkowitz said he believes once a dog park in Shaw Park, it is there for good and would not be moved.

After the Commission's dog park discussion, dog park supporters were given the opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions. In summary, supporters explained how they would police the dog park, spoke about their frustration due to the fact that the Commission did not make a motion in support of a dog park in Shaw Park, and it was mentioned that parking issues will be present because there are already issues. Dog park proponents also stated that many of the same questions and answers were discussed, as had been in the past, and the Commission should have known tonight whether or not they wanted a dog park in Shaw Park. They touched on the fact that dog parks are a multi-cultural amenity that get dogs and people out and about, and social connections are made at dog parks are very important.

In conclusion, the Commission will receive answers to their survey questions before the next meeting, and will consider a motion about the Shaw Park Dog Park at the January or February meeting.

**FY 2011 Financial Report:** Ms. DeForrest postponed the Financial Report presentation. The presentation will take place at the January 2012 Commission meeting.

**Director's Report:** Ms. DeForrest stated that over 600 people attended *All that Glitters* at Shaw Park Ice Rink and the other activities planned throughout the season to celebrate the Ice Rinks 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The Hanley House Candlelight tour will be held on December 15. There will be a 6:00 pm and a 7:00 pm tour. The Hanley Park Pavilion project has been delayed for permitting. Ms. DeForrest has heard from two families who would like to have a six foot fence build after the project is completed.

The Center of Clayton is very busy, member and resident program registration started today and new holiday hours have been implemented.

The Shaw Park Tennis Center project meeting is on Wednesday, December 7. The Shaw Park Trail site work will start on Tuesday, December 13. The Centennial Greenway project came in under budget; work will begin in the spring. The Artist Selection meeting is on Monday, December 12 at Centene. Ms. DeForrest reminded the Commission to contact her if they are interested in attending.

**Old Business / New Business -** There is no new or old business to report.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted By:

Denise Ucinski